

Belle Isle State Park in the Northern Neck was the first park in Virginia to be purchased with funds from the 1992 Parks and Recreational facilities Bond. Its 733 acres contain 7 miles of shoreline on the Rappahannock River and Mulberry and Deep Creeks. Here the visitor can explore a wide variety of tidal wetlands interspersed with agricultural fields and upland forests.

The area has been inhabited for the past 11,000 years, first with the camps of native Americans visiting on a seasonal basis. Over time, Algonquian-speaking groups settled along the coast, on the banks of the major rivers. By the time the colonists arrived a Powhatan tribe, the Moraughtacunds, had established a village in the area in and around Belle Isle.

The Belle Isle neck soon began to be farmed as a plantation and passed through the hands of several families during colonial times. The land was sold in pieces after the Civil War, and Belle Isle seemed destined to become a waterfront subdivision until being purchased by the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1993.

Much of the park continues to be farmed today and is exemplary of conservation practices currently used by farmers to prevent run off pollution from flowing into the Chesapeake Bay.

Belle Isle hosts several miles of tranquil multi-use, hiking, biking and horse trails. Bikes, motorboats and canoes are available for rent. Three picnic shelters can be

reserved in advance or are available on a first-come, first-served basis. While swimming isn't allowed, the park does allow excellent saltwater bank fishing.

Belle Isle offers a motorboat launch and a car-top launch providing access to some of the best fishing on the Rappahannock River. Croaker, spot, flounder and rockfish are found in the waters around Belle Isle State Park.

The Bel Air Overnight Area has two overnight facilities that can be rented together or separately. The Georgian-style Bel Air mansion has a fully furnished kitchen, laundry room, dining room, library and five bedrooms. With its large bay and picture windows, the Bel Air Guest House offers unlimited breathtaking views of sunsets on the Rappahannock River.

The mansion can accommodate up to six over night guests and the guest house sleeps eight, but the park can accommodate groups of up to 40 for meetings, retreats and special events.

Directions:

Belle Isle State Park is in Lancaster County, 75 miles from Richmond and 80 miles from Fredricksburg.

From Kilmarnock take route 3 West to Lively. Turn left onto Route 201. Turn right on Route 354 at St. Mary's White Chapel. At Route 683 turn left and follow road into park.

From Warsaw, take Route 3 East. Turn right on Route 354 and then right on Route 683.

Frequent Visitors Save Money

Annual passes for parking and swimming offer the frequent visitor greater savings. Stop by the park office for details.

Virginia State Parks Reservation Center

To receive more information on Virginia State Parks or to make a cabin or campsite reservation, call **1-800-933-PARK** (or in the Richmond calling area 225-3867).

Join Us in the Parks – DCR's Volunteer Program

DCR offers diverse opportunities for volunteers in most state parks and natural areas throughout the state. Inquire at the park office for details.

For more information, contact:

Belle Isle State Park
1632 Belle Isle Road
Lancaster, VA 22503
(804) 462-5030

You can also visit our home page at
www.state.va.us/-dcr



Department of Conservation & Recreation

CONSERVING VIRGINIA'S NATURAL & RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

203 Governor St., Suite 302
Richmond, Virginia 23219
(804) 786-1712 (TDD 804/786-2121)
Jim Gilmore, Governor



Belle Isle State Park Guide

Lancaster, Virginia

Virginia State Parks provide "A Natural Legacy" of outdoor activities and programs. They are an important part of DCR's efforts to promote a strong conservation ethic. These efforts ensure that the best of Virginia's natural resources will be protected and available for future generations.

Belle Isle

Welcome to Belle Isle State Park. To make your visit a safer and more pleasant one, we ask that you observe the following regulations.



The public use or display of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.



Pets are permitted in all State parks provided they are on a leash not to exceed six feet at all times.



Fishing from the shore is allowed with a valid Virginia fishing license.



Help preserve your park. Collecting animals, plants or artifacts is not permitted except by permit for scientific purposes.



Picnic shelters, tables and grilles are available for reservation and on a first come, first serve basis.



Hiking trails are open to walking and bicycling.



Horse trails and parking at park are available.*

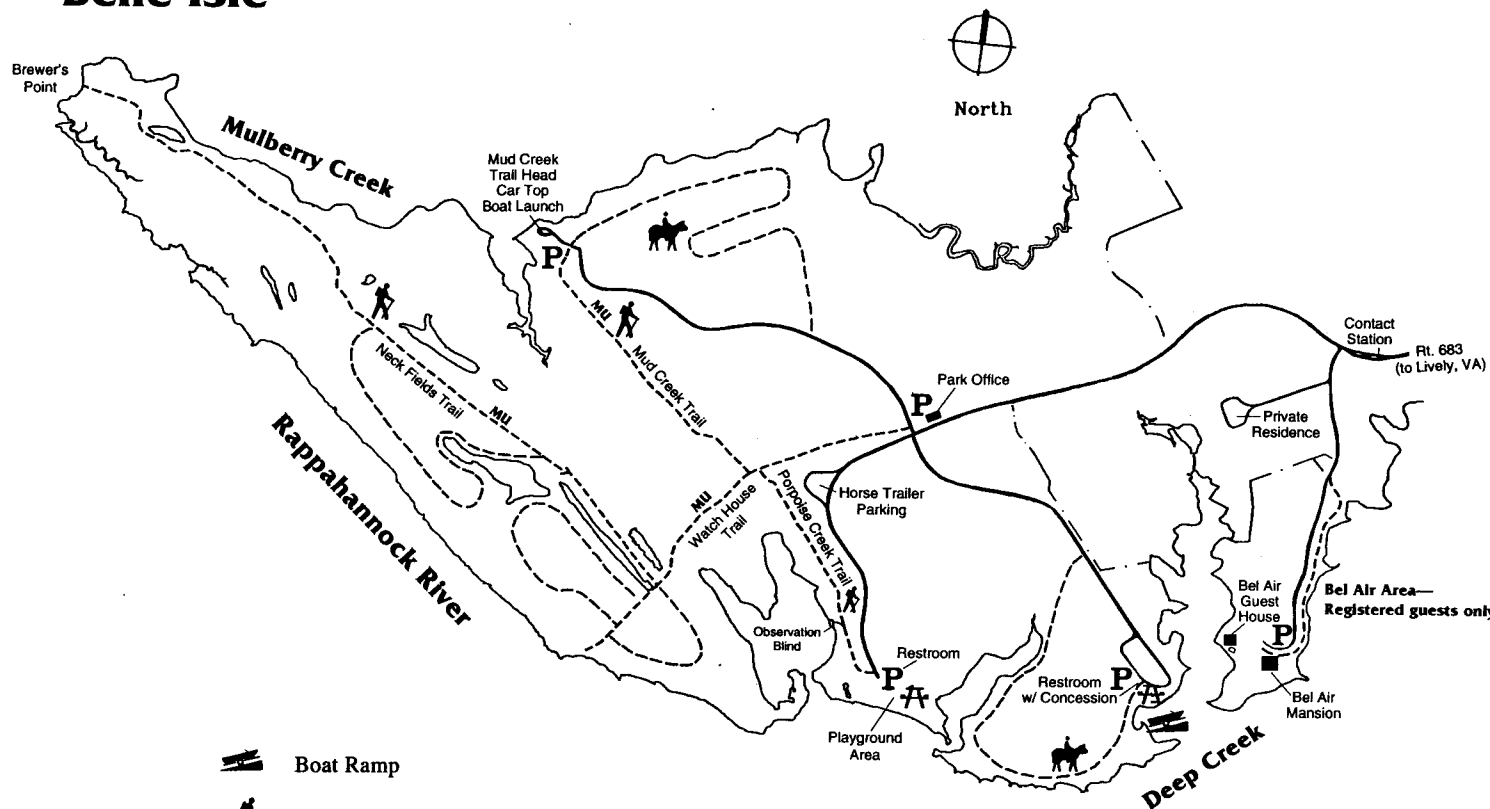


Swimming is not permitted.



Camping and campfires are not permitted.

* Some trails may be closed seasonally due to high water table.



Boat Ramp



Hiking Trail



Parking



Picnic Area



Horse Trail



Walking/Bicycling Trails



Park Boundary



Multi-use

Color Coding and mileage for the trails at Belle Isle State Park

MILES	TRAIL	COLOR
.4	Watch House	Red
1.2	Neck Fields	Green
.2	Porpoise Creek	Blue
.3	Mud Creek	Yellow